



HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL | B1

TAKING THE NEXT STEP

The Glencoe girls and Etowah boys each took the next step in their respective quests to win a state basketball championship, as the Yellow Jackets rallied past North Sand Mountain 65-61 in Class 3A while Etowah used a big fourth quarter to rout Mortimer Jordan 60-40 in 5A at the Northeast Regional



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Authority proceeding with project

Work paving way toward multi-sport facility groundbreaking later this year

By Donna Thornton Times Staff Writer

The Etowah County Mega Sports Complex Authority continues to pave the way — in financial matters, design work

and discussion — for breaking ground later this year on the first phase a planned multi-sport facility.

Authority Chair Ralph Burke told members Friday that work continues on the bond issue. He said the bond attorney told him the board needed to form at Capital Improvement Cooperative District to facilitate borrowing money.

Burke said both Gadsden and Rainbow City had been consulted, and Rainbow City had agreed to partner with the authority, pending passage of a resolution at the City Council’s next meeting.

The district would be incorporated for the purpose of acquiring real property, construction capital improvements and

public infrastructure for the construction of the sports complex project, according to the resolution approved by authority members.

Burke said the district would be governed by a board of directors with members from the authority and members appointed by the Rainbow City Council.

The authority would remain

responsible for repaying money borrowed by the district, and when the district is dissolved, title to all property would pass to and be vested in the authority.

Burke said if the City of Gadsden wants to be involved in the district, it can be included.

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Tradition made extra special



At left, Mabrey Gilbreath celebrates her 8th birthday during the 60th annual Kiwanis Pancake Day in Gadsden, Alabama, on Saturday. [PHOTOS BY DAVE HYATT/GADSDEN TIMES]

Birthday party highlights Pancake Day 2018

By Cassidy Smith Times Intern

Music, conversation and the sweet maple aroma of pancake syrup surrounded the Gadsdenites huddled Saturday in Convention Hall. Lines of people circled around the hall, surrounding the early birds already digging in to their plates. Pancake Day 2018 finally was here.

People of all different age groups, ethnicities, religions and political views gathered in the massive room, eating the fluffy goodness in harmony. What more could you ask for of a city event?

“Nelson Thomas would have a fit at what this has turned into,” Myron Gilbreath, referring to the father of Gadsden’s Pancake Day, said. “It started 60 years ago as a charity event; now it’s basically city tradition. I’ve been coming since I was about 20 years old,

See PANCAKE, A8



Mabrey Gilbreath celebrates her 8th birthday with family and friends during the 60th annual Kiwanis Pancake Day in Gadsden, Alabama, on Saturday.

Anniston woman struck, killed by train

By Kirsten Fiscus The Anniston Star

An Anniston woman was struck by a train Thursday afternoon and her husband remained in the Anniston City Jail on Friday morning charged with murder in the incident, officials said.

Police responded to a set of train tracks near Cooper Circle in the Wellborn area around 4:15 p.m. after receiving a report that a person had been struck by a train, Anniston police Sgt. Kyle Price said Friday morning.

There, police found Connie Burgess, 41, suffering from wounds caused by the train, Calhoun County Coroner Pat Brown said.

Burgess was taken to Regional Medical Center, where she died from her injuries and was

pronounced dead at 5:01 p.m., Brown said.

Police also found Burgess’ husband, Benny Burgess, 56, at the scene, Price said.

“We talked with a couple of witnesses working on the train and we talked with Mr. Burgess,” Price said. “Mr. Burgess did not have a lot to say on the subject.”

Price said crew members on the cargo train had seen the couple walking on the tracks.

“The witnesses on the train obviously couldn’t hear what they were talking about but based on their observations we arrested Mr. Burgess for murder,” Price said.

The sergeant declined to say if the witnesses specified if Burgess shoved his wife back onto the tracks as the train approached.

Indictment: Social media firms got played

By Matt O’Brien and Mae Anderson The Associated Press

Friday’s election-interference indictment brought by Robert Mueller, the U.S. special counsel, underscores how thoroughly social-media companies like Facebook and Twitter were played by Russian propagandists.

And it’s not clear if the companies have taken sufficient action to prevent something similar from happening again.

Thirteen Russians, including a businessman close to Vladimir Putin, were charged Friday in a plot to interfere in the 2016 U.S. presidential election through social media propaganda. The indictment said the Russians’ conspiracy aimed, in part, to help Republican Donald Trump

and harm the prospects of his Democratic opponent, Hillary Clinton.

The alleged scheme was run by the Internet Research Agency, a troll farm based in St. Petersburg, Russia, which used bogus social media postings and advertisements fraudulently purchased in the name of Americans to try to influence the White House race. The messages also sought to denigrate Trump GOP primary rivals Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz, and to support Clinton’s Democratic opponent Bernie Sanders.

“I created all these pictures and posts, and the Americans believed that it was written by their people,” wrote one of the defendants, Irina Kaverzina, in an email to a family member

See RUSSIA, A5



LIFE | C1 BIG HOUSE

As kids they dreamed about it, now as adults they own it